



“Energy Drinks” Cause Health Concerns

Canned beverages commonly called “energy drinks” usually contain caffeine, sugar, and other ingredients that are claimed to provide a boost of energy. In addition to caffeine, energy drinks may contain other legal stimulants such as guarana and ginseng.

In surveys, 24% to 57% of persons between ages 11 and 35 reported using an energy drink in the last few months. A January 2013 report by Packaged Facts, a publisher of market research in the food and beverage industry, reported total U.S. sales in the energy beverage market of more than \$12.5 billion for 2012. In that category energy drinks had about 78% of market share, followed by energy shots at 18% and energy drink mixes at 4%. Popular brands include Red Bull, Rockst★r (Rockstar), and Monster.

One of the first mass-market energy drinks was Red Bull, introduced in Austria in 1987 and the U.S. in 1997. The energy drink category now comprises hundreds of brands. The largest energy drink company in the U.S. by volume is Monster Beverage Corporation of Corona, California. Another major producer is Austria’s Red Bull GmbH.

The rapidly growing popularity of energy drinks, particularly among the young, has become a cause of concern to some parents and health experts. Much of their concern is due to the caffeine content of these drinks. Health experts recommend that adolescents get no more than 100 milligrams of caffeine a day, and that younger children not drink caffeinated beverages on a regular basis. As discussed below, a recent analysis of 27 top-selling energy drinks found caffeine levels as high

as about 242 milligrams per serving — and some brands label a single can or bottle as multiple servings.



It was reported in October 2012 that the U.S. Food and Drug Administration was investigating reports that five people had died since 2009 after consuming Monster-branded energy drinks. A wrongful-death lawsuit was filed against the company by the parents of a Maryland teenager who died in December 2011 of cardiac arrest after drinking two 24-ounce cans of Monster. (The teenager had mitral valve prolapse—a pre-existing cardiac defect).

Some states have considered bills that would prohibit selling energy drinks to minors. Current Illinois House Bill 2379 (Arroyo-Fine-Gabel-Zalewski-D’Amico et al.) would ban sales to anyone under 18 of an “energy drink,” which it would define as any beverage containing all four of the following: ginseng (in any form), glucuronolactone, guarana, and taurine.

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The bill was re-referred to the House Rules Committee on April 19, 2013, for failing to meet the deadline for Third Reading. Another bill to ban sales of “energy drinks” (as differently defined) to persons under 18—H.B. 2923 (Fine)—was also re-referred to the Rules Committee for lack of action by the deadline.

Ingredients

The most common active ingredient in energy drinks is caffeine. It is often combined with components such as taurine, glucuronolactone, guarana, ginseng, and B vitamins to form a so-called “energy blend.” Other ingredients in some energy drinks include ginkgo biloba, L-carnitine, and sugars.

Caffeine

Caffeine is a bitter substance found in coffee, tea, soft drinks, chocolate, and some medications. It is the most common stimulant in energy drinks. It has several effects on human metabolism, including stimulating the central nervous system. These effects make a person more alert and provide a perceived burst of energy.

However, overuse of caffeine can be harmful. Too much caffeine can make a person restless, anxious, and irritable. It has also been found to cause disrupted sleep patterns, headaches, abnormal heart rhythms, and other problems. A person who stops using caffeine may experience withdrawal symptoms.

Amounts of caffeine in energy drinks vary widely. A December 2012 study in *Consumer Reports* magazine found caffeine levels ranging from 6 milligrams to 242 milligrams per serving in 27 top-selling energy drinks or “shots” (a concentrated form of an energy drink, often sold in a small plastic bottle containing only 2 fluid ounces). For comparison, an 8-ounce cup of coffee has about 100 milligrams of caffeine, and a 16-ounce Starbucks grande has about 330 milligrams.

Fifteen of the drinks in the *Consumer Reports* sampling had caffeine levels below 100 milligrams per serving. They ranged from 6 milligrams (5-hour Energy Decaf) to 98 milligrams (Nestle Jamba). Seven others contained over 200 milligrams per serving, ranging from 210 milligrams for Full Throttle to 242 milligrams for 5-hour Energy Extra Strength.

Only 16 of the 27 beverages studied disclosed specific caffeine amounts on their labels. Among those 16, five were found to have more caffeine per serving than they listed, with an average excess content of over 20%. For 10 of the 11 other drinks that listed caffeine amounts per serving, testing found caffeine levels elevated but within 20% of those claimed.

Taurine

Taurine is a compound similar to amino acids (the building blocks of protein), but is not technically an amino acid. It is a normal component of human diets, found naturally in meat, fish, and breast milk. It is also commonly available as a dietary supplement.

Taurine supports neurological development and helps regulate levels of water and mineral salts in

the blood. It is also believed to have antioxidant properties. Some studies suggest that taurine supplements may improve athletic performance. In a related study, people with congestive heart failure taking taurine reportedly showed improvement in their exercise capacity.

Up to 3,000 milligrams (about 1/10 ounce) of supplemental taurine per day is considered safe. The kidneys excrete any excess taurine. Little is known about effects of heavy or long-term taurine use.

The amounts of taurine in energy drinks are believed to be below levels that would bring either benefits or harmful effects. Thus, taurine in energy drinks is not dangerous but probably not useful. A 2010 review of energy drink contents and safety reported that three of the best-selling energy drinks (Red Bull, Rockstar, and Monster) each contained 2,000 milligrams of taurine per 16 fluid ounces. It was also in another best-seller, Full Throttle, but is listed only as part of a 3,000-milligram “energy blend.”

Glucuronolactone

Glucuronolactone is a naturally occurring substance, produced in small amounts by the metabolism of glucose in the human liver. It is purported, but not proven, to fight fatigue. If administered to humans, it is rapidly metabolized and excreted as glucaric acid and other products. Rodents can synthesize vitamin C from glucuronolactone, but humans do not have this ability.

Dietary supplementation with glucuronolactone and similar compounds may aid the body’s defenses against carcinogens and tumor

promoters. But little research has been done on humans, and the current body of knowledge about this substance is small.

Among four popular drinks (Red Bull, Rockstar, Monster, and Full Throttle), Red Bull and Monster list glucuronolactone as an ingredient but do not state amounts. Monster lists glucuronolactone as a part of its 5,000-milligram “energy blend.”

B Vitamins

The B vitamins are a group of water-soluble vitamins that help the body absorb or use energy from food. They include B1 (thiamine), B2 (riboflavin), B3 (niacin), and B5 (pantothenic acid) among others. Energy drinks contain large amounts of sugar, and their makers tout B vitamins as critical for converting those sugars to energy.

B vitamins play roles in the formation of red blood cells. A lack of B vitamins can cause anemia. These vitamins are found in proteins such as fish, poultry, meat, eggs, and dairy products. Leafy green vegetables, beans, and peas are also good sources of some B vitamins. Some foods such as cereals and breads are fortified with some B vitamins.

Guarana

The guarana plant is a rainforest vine, prevalent in the Amazon Basin of South America. It is cultivated there for its caffeine-rich fruits, and has long been used by residents to increase awareness and energy. In medical practice it has been used to treat fevers, headaches, and dysentery. It is also promoted as an appetite suppressant, stimulant, and aphrodisiac, and to alleviate fatigue.

Guarana seeds have more caffeine than any other plant in the world—from 2% to 8%, about twice as much caffeine as coffee beans. Effects of guarana in humans are attributed primarily to the high caffeine content of its seeds.

However, the amounts of guarana in popular energy drinks are below those expected to bring benefits or harm. It is not inherently dangerous; but too much of it can cause problems like those from getting too much caffeine from any other source.

The label of Red Bull does not list guarana extract. Rockstar lists 50 milligrams per can of 16 fluid ounces. Both Monster and Full Throttle list guarana, but only as a component of a proprietary “energy blend.”

Ginseng

Asian ginseng is a perennial plant grown in China, Korea, Japan, and Russia. American ginseng is a plant with similar properties grown mainly in the U.S. Ginseng is among the most popular herbal supplements, used to treat or prevent many ailments.

Ginseng is purported to increase energy, relieve stress, and increase memory. Promoters claim it increases athletic performance. Adverse affects are varied and can include abnormally low blood pressure, rapid heart rate, insomnia, and fever.

The amount of ginseng extract in energy drinks is thought to be below levels bringing benefits or harm. A 16-ounce serving of Rockstar has 50 milligrams of ginseng extract; the same amount

of Monster contains 400 milligrams. Full Throttle lists ginseng only as a component of a 3,000-milligram “energy blend,” and Red Bull’s label does not list it at all.

Ginkgo biloba

Ginkgo is one of the oldest living tree species. Its leaves are among the most widely studied herbs used today. Ginkgo biloba extract, derived from these leaves, has been used in Chinese medicine for centuries.

In the U.S., ginkgo biloba has been used to treat blood disorders and to improve memory. It has also been used to treat dementia and intermittent claudication (poor circulation in the legs), and has been studied for improving memory in older adults. Laboratory studies show that it can improve blood circulation by dilating blood vessels. It is also reported to have antioxidant properties.

So far no large, randomized, controlled clinical trials have shown that ginkgo biloba extract has important effects in healthy or ill persons. Rockstar contains 300 milligrams of ginkgo biloba extract as part of its “energy blend.” Ginkgo biloba is not listed as an ingredient of Red Bull, Monster, or Full Throttle.

L-Carnitine

Carnitine is derived from an amino acid and is in nearly all cells in the body. In one of two forms (L-carnitine), it is synthesized mostly by the liver and kidneys, and increases metabolism and energy use. The body produces enough carnitine to meet the needs of most people. Animal products

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Study Sheds Light on Women in State Legislatures

The 2012 election brought a slight increase in the number of women serving in state legislatures. Women are now about 24% of state legislators in the U.S., versus 23.7% in 2012. In Illinois, women increased from 30.5% of state legislators in 2012 to 32.2% in 2013. Women make up the highest percentage of legislators in Colorado (42%) and the lowest in Louisiana (11.1%). In only five states are women higher percentages of legislators than in Illinois: Colorado (42%), Vermont (40.6%), Arizona (35.6%), Minnesota (33.3%), and New Hampshire (33%).

Rutgers University’s Center for American Women and Politics studies women’s representation in political leadership. It reports that the rate of increase in women’s representation in state legislatures has slowed after a time of rapid growth. From 1971 to 1999, women grew from 4.5% to 22.4% of legislators. There has been little growth since.

Survey of Legislators

Using data from a 2008 nationwide survey of legislators, the Rutgers Center compared male and female legislators’ personal and professional backgrounds and decisions to run for office. The Center sent questionnaires to all 1,737 female state legislators and to the same number of male ones (randomly chosen for

sampling, in the same numbers as female legislators in each legislative house). A total of 1,268 legislators responded, giving a 36.5% response rate. The response rate was higher among women (40.7%) than among men (32.2%). The researchers reported several key findings:

- (1) More women decided to run because someone suggested it (51%) than said it was entirely their own idea (26.5%). Most men said that they had at least seriously thought about running before anyone else brought up the idea.
- (2) Women were more likely than men to say that party support was very important in their decisions to run.
- (3) Organizations other than parties also played larger roles in women’s decision to run than in men’s.
- (4) Women who ran were more likely to come from health and education fields than were men, and more likely to run for office because of interest in particular issues than men.
- (5) Women believed that it is harder for women than for men to raise money for campaigns. Women were more likely to attend campaign training or workshop sessions.

Decision to Run for Legislative Office

The researchers stated that women need to be recruited because they are much less likely than men to decide to run on their own. The survey also found that women and men seek state legislative office for somewhat different reasons. Table 1 shows what (beyond a general desire to serve the public) respondents cited as the single most important reason for running.

Table 1: Reasons Legislators Ran for Office

<i>Greatest reason for running</i>	<i>Representatives</i>		<i>Senators</i>	
	<i>Women</i>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Men</i>
Concern about public policy issue(s)	36%	27%	46%	36%
Asked by elected official	24	15	15	8
Longstanding desire for political involvement	16	29	15	26
Desire to change how government works	11	17	13	20
Dissatisfaction with the incumbent	2	2	1	3
Race seemed winnable	2	2	1	3
Other	5	6	3	5

Source: Kira Sanbonmatsu et al., “Poised to Run: Women’s Pathways to the State Legislature,” 2009, p. 9, Table 2 (downloaded from the Center for American Women and Politics Internet site).

Women were also slightly more likely than their male counterparts to report that someone tried to discourage their candidacies (32% versus 25% for representatives and 34% versus 30% for senators). Minority women were even more likely to have encountered an effort to discourage them from running, with 42% reporting such an effort. The researchers concluded that because women are much less likely than men to plan to run, and receive more discouragement than men, recruitment is necessary for more women to run for state legislative office.

The researchers said that parties and current officeholders are the key agents of recruitment, and also the most common source of efforts to discourage candidacy, for both men and women. Among state representatives, 55% of men and 48% of women said that a party official, legislative leader, or other officeholder was the most influential source of recruitment when they ran for their first elective office. But they also reported that political actors were the most common sources of discouragement (56% for men and 50% for women).

While men and women legislators reported similar levels of both support and discouragement from political actors, women placed more importance on party support. More women than men said that having their party's support was very important in their decisions to run for legislative office (35% vs. 25% for representatives, and 38% vs. 23% for senators).

Other organizations are also more important to women's decisions to run for office. Among responding state representatives, 28% of women reported that an organization other than their political party played an important role in getting them to run, versus only 19% of men. Women's organizations were the most common type of organization mentioned by women representatives (especially by Democrats), followed closely by organizations for children or youth and business or professional groups.

Candidate Backgrounds

The researchers found some gender differences in how men and women reach legislatures. They concluded that gender differences in prior political experiences, occupations, and family factors show that persons interested in recruiting women candidates may need to broaden their search.

Among representatives who had held prior office, women were more likely than men to start on a school board (26% vs. 16%) or a local or county board or commission (38% vs. 32%). Among senators who had previously run for any office, 32% of women and 48% of men first ran for a House seat. Women senators were also more likely than male senators to start on a school board—22% versus 10% for men.

Male and female legislators also come from somewhat different occupations. Among representatives, 18% of women compared to 11% of men are elementary or secondary school teachers.

Women are also more likely than men to be nurses or other non-physician health workers (8% vs. 1%). Women are less likely to be lawyers, farmers, or self-employed.

Family considerations also play a larger role in women's candidacies than men's. The survey found that women placed much greater importance than men on the ages of their children in their decision to run for office. The factor "my children being old enough" was rated as very important by 57% of women representatives versus 38% of men.

There were also significant gender differences in marital and parental status. Women representatives were less likely than men to be married (71% vs. 88%) and much more likely to be divorced, separated, or widowed (25% vs. 6%). Women representatives were also less likely to be parents of children under age 6 (3% vs. 8%) or under age 18 (14% vs. 22%).

The researchers concluded that persons interested in recruiting women to office should focus on recruiting women over age 50 in addition to those who are younger. Women over 50 are the most likely to run because their children are grown and their family responsibilities have lessened. The survey found that women legislators ran for their current offices at an average age of 50. □

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Hookah Smoking Is Popular but Risky

Cigarettes are the primary targets of youth anti-smoking campaigns, but tobacco smoking using hookahs is increasingly popular among young Americans. A recent survey cited by the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) found that 18.5% of 12th graders admitted using a hookah in the preceding year. A University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine study of 152 U.S. universities found that over 30% of students had smoked using hookahs in the preceding month.

Hookahs are types of pipes used to smoke flavored tobacco that involve drawing the smoke through water. The product smoked, called “shisha,” is a moist mixture of tobacco, sweetener, and flavorings. A metal screen or perforated piece of foil covers the shisha, with a burning piece of charcoal or wood on top. As the user draws on an attached hose, air is pulled through the charcoal and tobacco. The smoke then bubbles through water in a bowl, cooling it before it is inhaled.

Research suggests that the rising popularity of hookah smoking is partly due to a belief that smoking through a hookah is less harmful than smoking a cigarette. Many young people apparently think that hookah smoke has less nicotine and other toxins than cigarettes due to bubbling through water.

In reality, because of differences between hookah and cigarette

smoking practices, a hookah session is more harmful than smoking a cigarette. Cigarette smokers typically take 10 to 13 puffs per cigarette, each about 50 milliliters (ml), for a total of 500 to 600 ml of smoke. By contrast, a hookah session may last over an hour and involve nearly 200 puffs, with average puff volume exceeding 500 ml. Thus, total smoke inhaled per session can be about 90,000 ml (nearly 24 gallons).

Two studies used machines to compare the content of smoke inhaled in a hookah session to that of smoking a cigarette, based on smokers’ actual behavior. The findings suggested that smoking a hookah provided 1.7 times as much nicotine, 6.5 times as much carbon monoxide, and 46.4 times as much “tar” as smoking one cigarette.

Another concern is that the heat sources applied to burn the tobacco, such as wood or charcoal, may increase the health risks of hookah use. Charcoal smoke contains not only carbon monoxide but also metals and cancer-causing chemicals that can also be inhaled by a hookah user.

The CDC compares hookah smoke to cigarette smoke as follows:

- (1) Hookah smoking delivers comparable amounts of nicotine and is at least as toxic as cigarette smoke.
- (2) Due to factors such as frequency of puffing, depth of inhalation, and length of the smoking session, hookah smokers may absorb higher concentrations of the toxins found in cigarette smoke.
- (3) A typical 1-hour hookah session involves inhaling 100



Illustration by Kathleen Young

to 200 times the volume of smoke inhaled from one cigarette.

- (4) Hookah smokers are at risk for the same kinds of harm as those caused by cigarettes—including oral cancer, lung cancer, stomach cancer, esophageal cancer, restricted lung function, and lower fertility.

Factors affecting hookah popularity

Since hookahs are a type of smoking pipe, shisha is classified as pipe tobacco. Taxes are much lower on pipe tobacco than on cigarette tobacco. The federal tax on pipe tobacco is \$2.8311 per pound. The federal cigarette tax is \$50.33 per 1,000 cigarettes if their total weight does not exceed 3 pounds—equivalent to at least \$16.78 per pound of cigarettes (more if they weigh less than 3 pounds per 1,000). Illinois taxes tobacco, other than cigarettes and moist snuff, at 36% of wholesale price. The state tax on cigarettes is \$1.98 per pack of 20. Cook County adds \$2 and Chicago adds 68¢; so taxes make up most of the retail price of cigarettes there. Research shows that adolescents and young adults are 2 to 3 times as sensitive to price as adults, so lower tax rates on

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Hookah Smoking Is Popular but Risky

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shisha than on cigarette tobacco may encourage hookah use by young persons.

Many young people are attracted to hookah use by opportunities for social interaction. In one small survey, 79% of surveyed hookah users reported that their use was at least partly due to a desire to socialize with other users.

Federal and state laws

The federal Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act (2009) bans cigarette flavors except menthol and tobacco. No such ban applies to pipe tobacco, cigars, or smokeless tobacco.

The fruity aromas of shisha make it particularly appealing to youth, and may contribute to the perception that hookah smoking is safer than using cigarettes.

The Smoke Free Illinois Act allows smoking in a “Retail tobacco store” if it was operating before 2008, or it is in a separate building and smoke does not migrate to an enclosed area where smoking is illegal. The Act defines such a store in relevant part as “a retail establishment that derives more than 80% of its gross revenue from the sale of loose tobacco, plants, or herbs and cigars, cigarettes, pipes, and other smoking devices for burning tobacco and related smoking accessories and in which the sale of other products is merely incidental.” That appears to allow operation of hookah bars and cafés if nearly all their revenue comes from selling tobacco and accessories. □

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such as meat, fish, poultry, and milk are all sources of it.

Some evidence suggests that carnitine plays a role in preventing cell damage and helps in recovery from exercise stress. But dietary carnitine supplementation does not appear to increase the body’s use of oxygen or improve metabolism when exercising.

Healthy children and adults do not need to consume carnitine from food or supplements, since the liver and kidneys make sufficient amounts to meet daily needs. At amounts over 3 grams per day, carnitine supplements may cause nausea, vomiting, cramps, diarrhea, and a “fishy” body odor.

Rockstar contains 50 milligrams of L-carnitine as part of a 1.35-gram “energy blend.” It is present in an unknown quantity in the “energy blends” of Monster and Full Throttle. It is not listed in the label of Red Bull.

Sugars

Energy drinks also typically contain sugars—usually high-fructose corn syrup or sucrose (table sugar). But sugar-free and/or diet versions of some drinks are available.

Sugars (and other carbohydrates such as starches) are readily used by skeletal muscles to produce energy. Administration of glucose or other carbohydrates before, during, and after exercise lasting longer than 1 hour has been shown to postpone fatigue,

conserve muscle energy, and improve performance. Its effects during intermittent exercise, such as competitive sports, are less well established.

Sugar in the normal daily diet should be limited. Long-term exposure to excess amounts of simple sugars (such as sucrose and high-fructose corn syrup) is associated with development of obesity and insulin resistance. If insulin-producing cells in the pancreas are overworked due to reduced insulin sensitivity, diabetes may eventually result.

The amount of sugar in a typical energy drink is about 54 grams per 16-ounce can. A teaspoon of sugar weighs about 4 grams, so a typical energy drink contains about 13 teaspoons of sugar—over ¼ cup.

Rockstar has about 60-62 grams of sugar per 16 fluid ounces; Full Throttle has 57-58 grams; Monster and Red Bull each have 54 grams.

Other ingredients

Other components of some energy drinks include: inositol (a carbohydrate naturally produced in the human body); tyrosine and phenylalanine (dangerous to persons with phenylketonuria or PKU—a rare inherited metabolic disorder), which are amino acids found in protein-rich foods and/or milk; and citicoline (another stimulant). □

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Abstracts of Reports Required to be Filed With General Assembly

The Legislative Research Unit staff is required to prepare abstracts of reports required to be filed with the General Assembly. Legislators may receive copies of entire reports by sending the enclosed form to the State Government Report Distribution Center at the Illinois State Library. Abstracts are published quarterly. Legislators who wish to receive them more often may contact the executive director.

Auditor General's Office

Annual Report, 2012

Auditor General did 99 financial and/or compliance audits of state agencies in FY 2011. Highlights: State's financial reporting process does not allow timely financial reporting; state lacks adequate controls to assess risk that information reported by agencies may not be fairly stated and compliant with generally accepted accounting principles; state lacks sufficient controls to ensure that financial obligations are paid on time; Department of Revenue's rates of unprocessed taxpayer information rose; Department of Transportation did not accurately report capital assets for FY 2011; Illinois Finance Authority did not implement internal auditing program required by law; Department of Public Health lost 75 computers that may have held confidential data; Department of Healthcare and Family Services lacked adequate controls over County Hospital Services Fund; Department of Human Services does not maintain adequate oversight of commodities; and North-eastern Illinois University did not

report all students who withdrew, or return their unearned Title IV aid.

Performance audits at legislative direction examined financial and business processes of the U of I Board of Trustees; Department of Healthcare and Family Services' selection of insurers for the state employees' group insurance program in spring 2011 (finding major shortcomings in this \$7 billion procurement); State Police administration of Firearm Owners Identification Card Act (finding inadequate protection against persons with mental illness who seek "FOID" cards); Workers' Compensation Program for state employees (also finding major shortcomings); life-cycle cost analysis for Department of Transportation road construction contracts (finding major errors or omissions); College Illinois! Prepaid Tuition Program's operations (finding conflicts of interest and other problems with investment management); expansion of Covering All Kids Health Insurance Program to higher-income families; Chicago Transit Authority's retirement plan and retiree

health care trust; Village of Robbins' use of municipal economic development funds in 2010 and 2011; and Regional Offices of Education. Also lists audits underway.

Auditor General's Information Systems Audit Division audited computer operations at several executive-branch agencies and state universities. It found security weaknesses at several agencies, including a Department of Central Management Services computer center that provides services for 11 agencies under a 2003 law. Five agencies and three universities lacked adequate controls to secure their computer resources; three agencies and two universities had inadequate policies to protect and dispose of confidential information; and six agencies and one university lacked disaster recovery plans for computers.

Also describes the office's actions in several other areas mandated by law. (30 ILCS 5/3-15; issued & rec'd March 2013, 40 pp.)

Attorney General's Office

Automated Victim Notification System report, FY 2012

The system informs victims, witnesses, police, and the public by phone and e-mail of changes in a prisoner's custody and court case status. On December 1, 2012 it had information on 60,991 offenders and over 664,474 open criminal cases, and had 308,152 active registered users. A 2011

U.S. Department of Justice grant enabled it to add text messaging; allow the Department of Human Services to notify victims when a person is committed to its custody; and upgrade 29 county jail interfaces. (725 ILCS 120/8.5(g); Dec. 2012, rec'd Jan. 2013, 4 pp.)

Collection statistics, 2012

State agencies referred 23,422 cases involving \$92.8 million to Attorney General, who collected \$570.9 million (including amounts from past years) on agency referrals. That excludes \$273.7 million in tobacco settlement payments and \$273.4 million in estate tax collected. (30 ILCS 205/2(j); issued & rec'd Feb. 2013, 2 pp.)

Social Security Number Protection Task Force report, 2012

Task Force was directed to examine state procedures to avoid unauthorized disclosure of Social Security Numbers (SSNs), and explore ways to replace SSNs with other numbers for state use. Describes statutory requirements that each state agency file an Identity Protection Policy with the Task Force, and each local government agency file with its governing board. Describes changes effective Jan. 1, 2012 to Consumer Fraud and Deceptive Business Practices Act and Personal Information Protection Act on keeping SSNs private; notifying victims of security breaches; and proper disposal of personal data. (20 ILCS 4040/10(c); Dec. 2012, rec'd Feb. 2013, 8 pp. + 3 appendices)

Violent Crime Victims Assistance Program, FY 2012

Program awarded 253 grants totaling \$4.16 million to nonprofit social service agencies and governments, for programs addressing child advocacy, domestic violence, sexual assault, court-appointed special advocates, and legal services among others. Funding, and awards, declined 33% in last 3 years. (725 ILCS 240/5(8); Dec. 2012, rec'd Jan. 2013, 5 pp.)

Central Management Services Dept.

Bilingual Employees Report, 2012

On March 21, 2012, CMS had 6 Spanish-speaking employees; all got bilingual pay. (5 ILCS 382/3-20; issued & rec'd March 2012, 2 pp.)

Business Enterprise Program annual report, FY 2012

State agencies and universities awarded \$269 million in contracts to businesses certified under Business Enterprise Program for Females, Minorities and Persons with Disabilities—exceeding statutory goal of \$194 million. Lists 64 agencies' and universities' statutory and targeted goals and value of contracts to such firms. (30 ILCS 575/8f; issued & rec'd March 2013, 66 pp. + executive summary)

Property Leasing, 2012

Department had no new installation or lease-purchases in 2012. (20 ILCS 405/405-300; Jan. 2012, rec'd Feb. 2013, 1 p.)

Recycling & Recycled Paper Procurement Update, FYs 2010-11

The program began battery recycling; provided recycling bins at State Fairgrounds; implemented book recycling in Springfield area; added plastic recycling to Springfield area recycling contract; and began a program to recycle fluorescent bulbs. Lists 2012 program goals and recycled paper procurement data. (415 ILCS 20/3(j); Oct. 2011, rec'd Jan. 2013, 8 pp.)

State-owned & real surplus property, 2012

Federal agencies filed papers to take Thomson Correctional Center in October 2012. Compensation for the property is \$165 million. CMS will offer a newly acquired parking lot at 4th and Capitol in Springfield to other state agencies. (30 ILCS 605/7.1; Jan. 2013, rec'd Feb. 2013, 1 p.)

State report printing summary, 2012

Lists 14 agencies printing annual reports using CMS or outside printers. Their 2,621 copies of reports cost \$15,815. Executive Inspector General printed the most (400). (30 ILCS 500/25-55; Jan. 2013, rec'd Feb. 2013, 3 pp.)

Children and Family Services Dept.

Administration of psychotropic medications to children, 2012

Reports on prescribing and monitoring of psychotropic drugs to children in foster care. Board-certified psychiatric consultants review consent requests; DCFS

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guardian agents provide consent. Administration in emergencies must be reported to DCFS within 1 week. The system tracks responses to drugs to ensure that any causing adverse reactions are not used repeatedly. Children are screened when entering child welfare system on whether psychotropic medication may be helpful. They are told the effects and reasons for drugs before administration. (20 ILCS 535/15; issued & rec'd Dec. 2012, 11 pp.)

Commerce Commission

Public utilities report, 2012

Reviews major decisions and actions in 2012, and overviews industries. Major electric utilities' 2011 average prices per kilowatt-hour were: Mt. Carmel, 12.53¢; Commonwealth Edison, 11.77¢; AmerenIL, 9.46¢; and MidAmerican, 6.21¢. Major gas utilities' average prices per therm were: Mt. Carmel, 98.28¢; AmerenIL, 99.82¢; Peoples Gas, 87.85¢; Consumers Gas, 81.48¢; North Shore, 82.56¢; Illinois Gas, 84.04¢; Liberty Energy, 91.53¢; Nicor Gas, 68.5¢; and MidAmerican, 82.47¢. Lists major water rates; utility availability; status of appeals from ICC orders; federal actions affecting state utility services; significant ICC decisions; and emission allowance reports. (20 ILCS 5/4-304; Jan. 2013, rec'd Feb. 2013, 65 pp. + 2 appendices)

Transportation Regulatory Fund Annual Report, FY 2012

The Fund's income was \$10.4 million (\$6.2 million from regulating

motor carriers and \$4.2 million from railroads). Its total expenditures were \$10.7 million (\$4.7 million to regulate motor carriers and \$6 million for railroads). Fund has 67 employees. (625 ILCS 5/18c-1604; issued & rec'd Nov. 2012, 9 pp.)

Commerce & Economic Opportunity Dept.

Angel Investment Tax Credit Program, 2012

Program encourages interested persons and firms to invest in qualified Illinois new businesses. In 2012, 304 claimants got about \$10 million in tax credits. Of 99 businesses registered as qualified, 48 got investments qualifying for tax credits. (35 ILCS 5/220(h); issued & rec'd March 2013, 53 pp.)

Business Information Center report, 2011

The Center (also called the Illinois Entrepreneurship Network Business Information Center) answers business questions about state and federal requirements, regulatory processes, and assistance. In 2011 it got 7,457 inquiries, including 3,144 general business questions; 1,274 on licensing and registration; and 17 on international trade. (20 ILCS 608/15(q); Feb. 2012, rec'd March 2013, 9 pp.)

Business Information Center report, 2012

The Center handled 6,433 inquiries including 2,683 general business questions; 1,099 on licensing and registration; and 24 on international trade. (20 ILCS 608/15(q); Feb. 2013, rec'd March 2013, 8 pp.)

Employment Opportunities Grant Program, FY 2012

The program seeks to help historically underrepresented groups enter building trades apprenticeships and jobs. Funding fell from about \$1.1 million in FY 2011 to \$300,000 in FY 2012. Three \$100,000 grants were awarded. Lists accomplishments and performance measures. (20 ILCS 605/605-812(f); Dec. 2012, rec'd Jan. 2013, 4 pp.)

Enterprise Zone Annual Report, FY 2012

DCEO has designated 97 enterprise zones. Investments of \$2.46 billion created 11,194 jobs and retained 16,496 in FY 2012. Describes incentives generally; gives statistical summary of each zone and statewide summary. (20 ILCS 655/6; Oct. 2012, rec'd Dec. 2012, 11 pp.)

Urban Weatherization report, FY 2012

This program makes grants to entities working with local organizations to offer job training and possible employment, and subsidize weatherization for homeowners. It hired three permanent staff to monitor 16 training grants. Eligibility area was expanded from five to 29 counties. Lists grant amounts and FY 2013 goals. (30 ILCS 738/40-40(h); Dec. 2012, rec'd Jan. 2013, 7 pp.)

Community College Board

Biennial report, 2011-2012

Illinois Community College Board oversees 48 community colleges in 39 districts. Over

18,490 baccalaureate or transfer degrees were earned in FY 2011, and 20,253 in FY 2012. Career and technical degrees numbered 43,048 in FY 2011 and 43,982 in FY 2012. In FY 2011, 82,895 high school students were enrolled in dual-credit courses; no number was reported for 2012. (110 ILCS 805/2-10; issued & rec'd Feb. 2013, 16 pp.)

Corrections Dept.

Annual report, 2011

A 2010 act created a pilot program to allow prisoners to “visit” family members by video links. By September 28, 2012, 1,710 such visits had occurred. IDOC is expanding the program to 27 adult prisons, 7 adult transition centers, and 9 work camps. Expansion will offer convenient visits to families while reducing risk of contraband smuggling. (730 ILCS 5/3-7-2(f-5); issued & rec'd Oct. 2012, 5 pp.)

Sex offender housing, 2012

The Department used one transitional living facility to house sex offenders. Another Chance Ministries, in East St. Louis, housed 53 in 2012. Gives names and convictions of offenders. (730 ILCS 5/3-17-5(e); undated, rec'd Dec. 2012, 2 pp.)

Quarterly report, October 1, 2012

On August 31, 2012, adult facilities had 48,996 residents—45% over rated capacity of 33,705 but 5% below operational capacity of 51,756. They were projected to rise to 49,149 by September

2013. Most were double-celled (68%) or multi-celled (25%), with about 34 square feet of living area each. Adult transition centers held 1,006 (76 below rated capacity and beds). Average ratio of prisoners to security staff was 6.3. Enrollment (unduplicated) in educational and vocational programs was 7,512. No capital projects were funded. (730 ILCS 5/3-5-3.1; Oct. 2012, rec'd Dec. 2012, 12 tables)

Higher Education Board

Annual report, 2011-2012

Some 924,749 students enrolled at 233 Illinois public or private college and universities in fall 2010—up 1.1% from 2009. The Board received less than \$2 billion for FY 2012, down \$128.4 million (6.1%) from 2011. It approved 52 applications for new programs in FY 2012. (110 ILCS 205/9.04; issued & rec'd Jan. 2013, 54 pp.)

Budget recommendations, FY 2014

Total General Fund recommendation of \$2.1 billion for operations and grants included: U of I, \$704 million; SIU, \$218 million; NIU, \$99 million; ISU, \$79 million; WIU, \$55 million; EIU, \$47 million; Northeastern, \$40 million; Chicago State, \$39 million; Governors State, \$26 million; community colleges, \$308 million; and Illinois Math and Science Academy, \$18 million. Capital recommendation was \$1.55 billion. (110 ILCS 205/8; issued & rec'd Feb. 2013, 129 pp.)

Public university tuition and fee waivers, FYs 2011 and 2012

Public universities granted 49,157 waivers worth \$415 million in FY 2011, and 48,083 waivers of \$415.8 million in FY 2012. By value, 23.9% of waivers went to undergraduate and 76.0% to graduate students; 86.3% of the total were “discretionary” waivers, which go to undergraduates with academic, athletic, or other achievements, and to graduate students for teaching and research assistantships. Lists number and value of waivers by university, and purposes, goals, and eligibility criteria for each waiver. (110 ILCS 205/9.29; Dec. 2012, rec'd Jan. 2013, 4 pp. + 3 tables and 2 appendices)

Human Services Dept.

Illinois childcare report, FY 2012

Department spent \$953.7 million on employment-related child care assistance, helping an average of 152,690 families with 265,693 children. Income limit in FY 2012 was \$41,352 for a family of three. Among participants, 94.8% are single parents and 46.7% are at or below the federal poverty threshold. (20 ILCS 505/5.15; issued & rec'd Mar. 2013, 19 pp.)

Inspector General's Report on Abuse and Neglect of Adults with Disabilities, FY 2012

Office of Inspector General (OIG) received 3,463 allegations of abuse and neglect at DHS facilities (746), community agencies (1,753), and domestic settings

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(964). Allegations at DHS facilities declined 23% in last 2 years, but rose 17% at community agencies and 34% in domestic settings. This likely will continue as services shift from facilities to communities. Among allegations, 1,100 were of physical abuse, 166 of sexual abuse, 568 of mental abuse, 133 of financial exploitation, and 1,163 of neglect. OIG cited 263 cases of late reporting. OIG closed 3,563 investigations, with 406 claims substantiated. It made unannounced visits to all 17 DHS facilities and made 22 site recommendations. It held 102 abuse and neglect training sessions for nearly 2,000 employees. (20 ILCS 2435/60; Nov. 2012, rec'd Jan. 2013, 25 pp.)

Illinois Community College Board

Adult Education and Family Literacy report, FY 2012

Adult education programs served 101,480 students: 54,196 English as a Second Language students; 24,919 in Adult Basic Education; 17,898 in Adult Secondary Education; 2,343 getting high school credit; and 2,124 vocational students. GEDs were earned by 15,613. Adult education providers included community colleges (39); community organizations (25); local education agencies (22); faith-based organizations (3); 4-year institutions (1); and the Department of Corrections (1). (105 ILCS 405/2-4; undated, rec'd March 2013, 3 pp.)

Illinois Film Office

Quarterly report, Apr.-June 2012
Office estimates that Film Production Services Tax Credit created or saved 5,438 jobs (2,138 technical crew and office jobs, 492 talent jobs, and 2,808 film extras), and that film production brought \$59 million in spending to Illinois. Office continues to encourage racial diversity in film industry. (35 ILCS 16/45(b); undated, rec'd Oct. 2012, 1 p.)

Quarterly report, July-Sept. 2012

Office estimates that Film Production Services Tax Credit created or saved 9,974 jobs (3,143 technical crew and office jobs, 575 talent jobs, and 6,256 film extra jobs), and that film production brought \$82.4 million in spending to Illinois. (35 ILCS 16/45(b); undated, rec'd Nov. 2012, 1 p.)

Quarterly report, Oct.-Dec. 2012

Office estimates that it created or retained 10,392 jobs (2,840 technical crew and office, 278 talent, and 7,274 extras). It estimates that film production brought \$68.2 million in spending to Illinois. It continued promoting diversity with a seminar for minorities on how to get into the film industry. (35 ILCS 16/45(b); undated, rec'd March 2013, 1 p.)

Illinois Housing Development Authority

Housing plan for 2013

Defines four focus areas: (1) revitalizing neighborhoods hurt by foreclosures by expanding state funding and technical aid; (2)

community-based and supportive housing for people with disabilities; (3) increasing statewide collaboration and productive housing policy changes; and (4) programs such as renters' tax credit, homebuyer rehab program, and preservation and stabilization pilot program (allocating \$15 million to preserve existing units with rental assistance or subsidies). (30 ILCS 345/7.5 and 310 ILCS 110/15(c); undated, rec'd Jan. 2013, 58 pp. + appendices)

Insurance Dept.

Office of Consumer Health Insurance annual report, 2011

The Office helps consumers with health insurance needs and reports trends in health insurance. Describes types of calls received; staff activities; efforts to expand public knowledge; and government actions and recommendations for improvement. Staff received 19,612 calls. Exhibits report calls by location; subject matter; materials often sent to consumers; and call totals. (215 ILCS 134/90(a)(7); Jan. 2012, rec'd March 2013, 62 pp. incl. 5 exhibits)

Juvenile Justice Dept.

Quarterly report, October 1, 2012

On August 31, 2012, there were 965 youth in all juvenile facilities, below rated capacity of 1,598 and bedspace for 1,992. Number was expected to decline to 940 by September 2013. Average ratio of youth to security staff was 1.4. All were single-celled (71%) or double-celled

(29%), with about 104 square feet of living area each. Enrollment (unduplicated) in educational and vocational programs was 742. No capital projects were being funded. (730 ILCS 5/3-5-3.1; Oct. 2012, rec'd Dec. 2012, 9 tables)

Quarterly report, January 1, 2013

On November 30, 2012 there were 940 youth in all juvenile facilities, below rated capacity of 1,598 and bed space for 1,992. Population was expected to decline to 924 by December 2013. Ratio of youth to security staff was 1.34. All were single-celled (78%) or double-celled (22%), with about 107 square feet of living area each. Enrollment (unduplicated) in educational and vocational programs was 767. No capital projects were being funded. (730 ILCS 5/3-5-3.1; issued & rec'd Jan. 2013, 9 tables)

Legislative Audit Commission
2011 annual report

Commission reviewed 152 compliance and financial reports and 5 performance audits. Accomplishments include some new laws enacted; review of all state agencies' emergency purchases; Web page maintenance; and publishing revised *Purchasing Laws and University Guidelines*. The state's process for compiling information on spending federal funds is inadequate and does not allow timely and accurate reporting. (25 ILCS 150/3; Jan. 2013, rec'd March 2013, 40 pp.)

Mid-Illinois Medical District Commission [Springfield]

Biennial report 2011-2012

Commission functioned using volunteer time and donated space while seeking an income source. A major issue it addressed is routing of high-speed rail through Springfield (the current passenger line splits the District and separates the city's two main hospitals). It also worked on recruitment for medical careers; developing a central Illinois health information exchange; and promoting the District and its medical providers. (730 ILCS 930/10(f); Feb. 2013, rec'd March 2013, 6 pp. + 2 addenda)

Property Tax Appeal Board

2012 annual report

Lists total reductions of at least \$100,000 by county; total cases decided; and total change in assessed value in last 5 years (on industrial and commercial appeals). Board closed 9,797 residential appeals in 2012 vs. 10,042 in 2011. (35 ILCS 200/16-190(b); Feb. 2013, 12 pp.)

Public Health Dept.

Hospital Capital Investment Program report, 2012

Program makes grants to hospitals to improve safety standards; build, renovate, or maintain buildings; improve technology and medical equipment; and maintain or improve patient safety and care. About \$150 million went to 123 Illinois hospitals for medical equipment acquisition (55); construction or renovation (39);

life-safety code work (22); and information technology (7). Lists each grant city, type, amount, and project, and its status. (20 ILCS 2310/2310-640(d); Dec. 2012, rec'd Jan. 2013, 7 pp. + appendices)

Illinois Abortion Statistics, 2011

Illinois had 41,324 reported induced pregnancy terminations, including 3,402 on residents of other or unknown states. Age distribution for Illinois residents: Up to 14, 185; 16-17, 2,174; 18-19, 3,528; 20-24, 11,867; 25-29, 9,099; 30-34, 6,143; 35-39, 3,390; 40-44, 1,232; and 45+, 63 (the ages of the other 241 were not reported). Classifies abortions by county, woman's age, gestational age, and procedure used. (720 ILCS 510/10(12); undated, rec'd Dec. 2012, 17 pp.)

Krabbe Disease and other Leukodystrophies report

Krabbe disease and some 50 other leukodystrophies have degenerative brain effects. Symptoms are hard to recognize but often include slowed physical and mental development. DNA tests can diagnose them, but many cases are un- or misdiagnosed. Krabbe disease occurs about once per 100,000 births; but all leukodystrophies occur about once in 1,500 to 7,000 births. There is no cure, and therapy is mostly symptom-based or for comfort. Sixteen clinical trials of treatment methods are underway. The Department notes the diseases' financial burden on families trying

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to provide for their children—who usually die at young ages. (H.J.R. 13 [2011]; Dec. 2012, rec'd Jan. 2013, 6 pp.)

Prostate and testicular cancer program report, 2012

Program promotes awareness and education about these cancers, and promotes screenings. The cancer with the highest age-adjusted rate in Illinois men (especially in African Americans) is prostate, although lung and bronchial cancer causes more age-adjusted deaths. Testicular cancer (age-adjusted) is about 1/30 as common, and even lower in African Americans. Department made grants of \$189,200 in 2012 for prostate screening. (20 ILCS 2310/2310-397(b)(4); June 2012, rec'd March 2013, 8 pp.)

Stroke Task Force Report, FY 2011

Task Force did not meet or spend state funds in FY 2011. Members were asked to serve on both the Illinois Stroke Task Force and a newly created Illinois Stroke Advisory Subcommittee; Department will recommend repeal of the Stroke Task Force section. (20 ILCS 2310/2310-372; undated, rec'd July 2012, 1 pp.)

Revenue Dept.

Live Theater Tax Credit, report July-Sept. 2012

Department had no data yet on new jobs created or production spending brought to Illinois.

DCEO continues to explore creation of opportunities for minorities and women. (35 ILCS 17/10-50(b); undated, rec'd Dec. 2012, 1 p.)

Live Theater Tax Credit report, Oct.-Dec. 2012

Department had no new jobs or vendor spending due to production to report. Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity is considering creating educational opportunities for minorities to promote diversity. (35 ILCS 17/10-50(b); undated, rec'd March 2013, 1 p.)

State Board of Education

Annual report, 2012

Total public school spending in 2011-2012 was \$28.73 billion: \$15.82 billion (55%) local; \$9.33 billion (32.5%) state; and \$3.59 billion (12.5%) federal. Enrollment fell from 2.07 million in 2010-2011 to 2.06 million in 2011-2012; number of districts declined by 1 to 866. Chronic truancy rate was 8.6%; dropout rate 2.5%; statewide operating spending per pupil \$11,664 in FY 2011; and elementary pupil-teacher ratio 18.9:1. Nearly half of students (49%) were low-income. (105 ILCS 5/1A-4(e); issued & rec'd Jan. 2013, 55 pp.)

Educational mandates report, 2012

Lists 16 new school mandates, of which 7 were expected to have costs but their amounts could not be estimated. They require,

among other things, a biannual survey of learning conditions in each district; redesign of school report cards to make similar schools comparable; that school districts publish student immunization data each year; and that information from police records on a student be kept “separate and apart” from the student’s school records. (105 ILCS 5/2-3.104; issued & rec'd March 2013, 4 pp.)

Illinois education funding recommendations, 2013

The Board is directed to make legislative recommendations for the Foundation level and supplemental state aid to schools. Recommendations include raising Foundation level per student to \$8,672 and supplemental general state aid poverty grant range to \$490-\$4,129 per student. (105 ILCS 5/18-8.05(M); issued & rec'd Jan. 2013, 12 pp.)

School mandate waiver requests, spring 2013

Classifies 75 waiver requests into categories and lists status: compilation of average daily attendance (1 sent to General Assembly, 1 withdrawn or returned); consolidation (2 sent); driver education (1 approved, 11 sent); evaluation training (1 sent); evaluation plan for principals (1 sent); funds (1 sent, 1 withdrawn or returned); legal school holidays (4 withdrawn or returned); length of school term (1 sent, 1 withdrawn or returned); limiting administrative costs (16 sent, 2

withdrawn or returned); low-income student funds plans (1 approved); nonresident tuition (15 sent); parent/teacher conferences (3 withdrawn or returned); physical education (12 sent, 2 withdrawn or returned); school board member training (1 sent); school improvement and in-service training (11 sent); and statement of affairs (2 sent). Describes each request and lists waivers by legislative district. (105 ILCS 5/2-3.25g; issued & rec'd March 2013, 13 pp. + charts)

State Board of Investment

Report on Emerging Money Managers, FY 2012

Illinois State Board of Investment (ISBI) updated its policy on emerging and minority investment managers and contractors in December 2011. In September 2012, emerging and/or minority investment firms managed 21.7% (\$2.6 billion) of ISBI assets. Lists all emerging and minority investment managers. (40 ILCS 5/1-109.1(4); Dec. 2012, rec'd Jan. 2013, 4 pp. + enclosures)

State Police Dept.

Interstate Gun Trafficking Task Force report (2010)

The Task Force (IGTTF) listed strategies in four areas to reduce illegal gun trafficking: laws; community education and public relations; enforcement; and training. It believed that gun trafficking could be reduced by laws, such as exceptions for gun investigations in eavesdropping

laws; suspending license plates of gunrunners; and allowing seizure of their vehicles. It also recommended a statewide advertising campaign including public service announcements and billboards. To improve enforcement, it recommended entry of all recovered shells into Integrated Ballistics Identification System; a new database for recording recovery of projectiles; and developing a ballistics van. It also recommended improved training for officers and others involved in enforcing gun trafficking laws, such as judges and state's attorneys. (H.J.R. 51 [2009]; Dec. 2010, rec'd Jan. 2013, 11 pp. + appendices)

Teachers' Retirement System

Final state funding certification for FY 2014

Certified the following state funding amounts for FY 2014: \$3.44 billion (under the law) or \$4.05 billion (under generally accepted actuarial standards). An attached resolution passed by all TRS trustees in spring 2012 said that due to the state's weak fiscal condition, they did not believe it would be able to fulfill its existing funding obligations to TRS. (40 ILCS 5/16-158(a-5); issued & rec'd Jan. 2013, 5 pp.)

Toll Highway Authority

Annual report, 2011

Unaudited data showed revenues of \$697 million and spending as follows: Maintenance and operations, \$248 million; debt service,

\$244 million; and renewing, replacing, and improving property, \$220 million. The Authority unveiled "Move Illinois"—a 15-year, \$12 billion capital program to improve tollways. Highway Emergency Lane Patrol (HELP) trucks helped 33,290 drivers. (605 ILCS 10/23(e); undated, rec'd Oct. 2012, 17 pp.)

Transportation Dept.

Diesel emissions annual report, FY 2012

Department's Diesel Emissions Testing Program is in 9 counties and 3 townships, with 53 public and 27 private testing stations. It inspected 3,718 vehicles, passing 3,551 and failing 18; 149 tests were invalid. (525 ILCS 5/13-102.1; June 2012, rec'd Feb. 2013, 1 p.)

"Always bear in mind that your own resolution to succeed is more important than any other."

Abraham Lincoln

BrainyQuote.com



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First Reading

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District Office Staff training offered

On July 8 and 9 the Legislative Research Unit will offer 1½ days of training to legislators' district office staffs. The 10th biennial District Office Staff seminar will be the only one in the 98th General Assembly. Its purpose is to help district staff learn how to deal with constituent issues. Attendees have described the training as highly valuable for learning about state agencies and understanding how to help with constituent problems.

The seminar will start the afternoon of Monday, July 8 with exhibit tables staffed by about 30 agencies in the state executive branch. Training programs will be held on Tuesday morning and afternoon. Presenters from the executive branch will address many issues of importance to constituents and explain how district staffs can assist them.

The event will be held at the Crowne Plaza hotel in Springfield. Legislators who have not yet responded to a recent letter on the seminar can register their staff at (217) 782-6851 or smccreight@ilga.gov. Registration is requested by May 31.